

Welcome Home by Deer_in_the_headlights

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Summary:

Mike's thoughts and experiences when El finally comes home to him. This is what happened after El closes the gate in the timeline of my Welcome to Literal Hell, El story.

Welcome Home

This had been the best and absolute worst day of Mike Wheeler's life. Well, not exactly the worst day, but definitely an extremely close second. He'd watched Joyce's boyfriend, Bob die. That was horrifying enough without experiencing the rest of his day. He had to watch his best friend be consumed by the Mind Flayer, slowly slipping away, the life draining from his eyes. He had to mentally prepare to be torn limb from limb by the demo-dogs at least twice that day, one time armed with nothing, the other armed with a candlestick. A candlestick? Really? Couldn't he have grabbed a knife from the kitchen or something? And that's where we come to the best day of his life. She came back to him. She was home. But she wasn't, she had to go save their butts again. And Mike couldn't go with her.

Mike paced around the Byers' living room, almost certainly wearing a dent in the musty old carpet. What if she was dead? This was definitely a bigger task than slaying the Demogorgon. No. She couldn't be dead. She'd just come back to him. No. It seemed like he was in a bubble, just watching the events that were taking place in the living room, waiting for what seemed like a millennium. Joyce and Jonathan sat on the couch, tangled up with Will, all sobbing. Nancy was lecturing Steve about literally everything that he'd done that night, even though she was incredibly grateful to him for keeping her brother safe. Dustin, Lucas, and Max sat on the loveseat, slipping in and out of consciousness. How could they be sleeping at a time like this?

Then he saw headlights and his heart was beating a mile a minute. She had to be alive. She promised. El doesn't break promises. He flew out of the door at the speed of light and beat Hopper to the passenger side door. He opened it and she practically fell out into his arms. Alive. She was Alive. She was here and she was home and he could cry in this moment. He carried her into the house and placed her on the couch that the Byers had vacated. Mike heard arrangements being made for them to stay the night at the Byers. Nancy and Jonathan in his room, Will and Joyce in her room, The kids in Will's room, and Hopper and Steve on the couch. El was still out cold as he carried her into Will's room, with some help from Dustin, and as he tucked her

into Will's bed. Dustin passed out in a chair, Lucas and Max huddled together on the floor. Usually, Mike would have endlessly made fun of Lucas for this but he didn't care right now. El was home. Home. Here with him.

He woke in the middle of the night to El, staring at him.

"I missed you." She whispered softly, he couldn't believe that she was there. This wasn't a dream, right? She was finally home with him.

"I missed you more than you could ever know" Mike replied, stroking her hair and pulling her into a hug.

They stayed like that until the entire house was woken by El's screams. She was having a nightmare, nothing new or different. It felt like she was back in the lab and she had to watch as Papa killed all of her friends, even Mike. Especially Mike. Hopper, Nancy, and Joyce ran to Will's room to see what was going on when they saw possibly the sweetest thing that had ever graced their vision. Mike was hugging El, whispering reassurances, as she sobbed into his chest. It looked as if they had no idea that anyone else existed in the world but them. Eventually, they all returned to their rooms, leaving the pair alone.

Mike Wheeler didn't know how he got so lucky as to know El. Will's room had been vacated by Max, Lucas, and Dustin, who had woken in search of food. It was just them. When she slept, El just looked like a girl. She didn't look like she had been through hell and back, she didn't look like she had been experimented on by the government for the first 12 years of her life. But that was their reality. She had been abused for most of her life. There were people that were still hunting El down. There was no way that Mike would ever let them even touch her ever again. She was here with him and she was finally safe. He wrapped his arms around her, holding her tight, still afraid that she would be stolen by some otherworldly monster.

"I'm never leaving again." she mumbled, eyes still closed, burrowing deeper into Mike's chest. It was in this moment, with El wrapped in his embrace, finally here with him after 353 days, that Mike Wheeler finally knew for sure that he was desperately and hopelessly in love with El.

Author's Note:

Thank you for reading! If you enjoyed this story please go check out my fic that this story is a part of. It's called Welcome to Literal Hell, El